



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

REGION III
2443 WARRENVILLE ROAD, SUITE 210
LISLE, IL 60532-4352

September 1, 2011

Mr. Mark A. Schimmel
Site Vice President
Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant
Northern States Power Company, Minnesota
1717 Wakonade Drive East
Welch, MN 55089

**SUBJECT: MID-CYCLE LETTER FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND NUCLEAR GENERATING PLANT,
UNITS 1 AND 2; 05000282/2011-006; 05000306/2011-006**

Dear Mr. Schimmel:

On August 10, 2011, the NRC completed its mid-cycle performance review of Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2. The NRC reviewed the most recent quarterly performance indicators (PIs) in addition to inspection results and enforcement actions from July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011. This letter informs you of the NRC's assessment of your facility during this period and its plans for future inspections at your facility. This performance review and enclosed inspection plan do not include security information. A separate letter will include the NRC's assessment of your performance in the Security Cornerstone and its security-related inspection plan.

The NRC determined the performance at Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Unit 2, during the most recent quarter was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) Action Matrix because all inspection findings had very low (i.e., green) safety significance, and all PIs indicated that your performance was within the nominal, expected range (i.e., green). Therefore, the NRC plans to conduct ROP baseline inspections at your facility (for Unit 2).

The NRC determined the performance at Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant, Unit 1, was within the Licensee Response Column of the NRC's ROP Action Matrix the first three quarters of the assessment period because all inspection findings had very low (i.e., green) safety significance and all PIs indicated that your performance was within the nominal, expected range (i.e., green). The NRC determined the performance during the most recent quarter was within the Regulatory Response Column of the NRC's Reactor Oversight Process (ROP) Action Matrix because of one inspection finding in the Mitigating Systems Cornerstone being classified as having low-to-moderate significance (i.e., white). This finding, from the second quarter of 2011, involved both trains of safety-related battery chargers being susceptible to locking up (i.e., stop providing an output, if the incoming alternating current voltage dropped below the nameplate minimum voltage at the battery charger motor control center during certain design basis events). Changes in your performance as reflected in the Action Matrix as a result of this finding are documented in the letter addressed to you dated, August 17, 2011 [ML112290087].

Therefore, in addition to ROP baseline inspections, the NRC plans to conduct a supplemental inspection in accordance with Inspection Procedure 95001, "Supplemental Inspection for One or Two White Inputs in a Strategic Performance Area," once your staff notifies the NRC of your readiness for it to conduct a supplemental inspection to review the actions taken to address the performance issues. The objectives of the Supplemental Inspection are to provide assurance that the root causes and contributing causes of the performance issue are understood, extent of condition and extent of cause are identified, and corrective actions implemented are sufficient to address the root and contributing causes to prevent recurrence.

The enclosed inspection plan lists the inspections scheduled through December 31, 2012. Routine inspections performed by resident inspectors are not included in the inspection plan. The inspections listed during the last nine months of the inspection plan are tentative and may be revised at the end-of-cycle performance review. The NRC provides the inspection plan to allow for the resolution of any scheduling conflicts and personnel availability issues. The NRC will contact you as soon as possible to discuss changes to the inspection plan should circumstances warrant any changes. We also plan on performing a special and infrequently performed inspection: Inspection Procedure (IP) 71003, "Post Approval License Renewal - Outage."

In the days following the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident in Japan, the Commission directed the staff to establish a senior-level agency task force to conduct a methodical and systematic review of the NRC's processes and regulations to determine whether the agency should make additional improvements to its regulatory system. The NRC has since completed Temporary Instruction (TI) 183, "Follow-up to Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Station Fuel Damage Event," and TI-184, "Availability and Readiness Inspection of Severe Accident Management Guidelines (SAMGs)" at your facility. Results of these inspections can be found here: <http://www.nrc.gov/japan/japan-activities.html>. Additionally, on May 11, 2011, the agency issued NRC Bulletin 2011-01, "Mitigating Strategies," to confirm compliance with Order EA-02-026, subsequently imposed license conditions, and 10 CFR 50.54(hh)(2), and to determine the status of licensee mitigating strategies programs. On July 12, 2011, the NRC's Task Force made its recommendations to the Commission in its report, "Recommendations for Enhancing Reactor Safety in the 21st Century: The Near-Term Task Force Review of Insights from the Fukushima Daiichi Accident." The NRC is currently reviewing the Task Force's recommendations to determine what additional actions may be warranted.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html> (the Public Electronic Reading Room).

M. Schimmel

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Please contact me or John Giessner, Chief, Branch 4, Division of Reactor Projects, at 630-829-9619 with any questions you have regarding this letter.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Steven West, Director
Division of Reactor Projects

Docket Nos. 50-282; 50-306
License Nos. DPR-42; DPR-60

Enclosure: Prairie Island Inspection/Activity Plan

cc w/encl: Distribution via ListServ

M. Schimmel

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Letter to M. Schimmel from S. West dated September 1, 2011.

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UNITS 1 AND 2; 05000282/2011-006; 05000306/2011-006

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Prairie Island
Inspection / Activity Plan
09/01/2011 - 12/31/2012

Planned Dates		Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site
Start	End			
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		1
10/03/2011	10/07/2011	IP 2515/179	Verification of Licensee Responses to NRC Requirement for Inventories of Materials Tracked in NSTS	
10/03/2011	10/07/2011	IP 71124.01	Radiological Hazard Assessment and Exposure Controls	
		BI OLRQ - BIENNIAL REQUAL PROGRAM INSPECTION		2
10/17/2011	10/21/2011	IP 7111111B	Licensed Operator Requalification Program	
		BI MODS - MODIFICATIONS / 50.59 INSPECTION		3
10/31/2011	11/18/2011	IP 7111117T	Evaluations of Changes, Tests, or Experiments and Permanent Plant Modifications	
		ISFSI - ISFSI INSPECTION - SCHEDULE DEPENDENT		1
12/01/2011	12/31/2011	IP 60855.1	Operation of an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation at Operating Plants	
		STRIKE - STRIKE CONTINGENCY - PLANNERS		2
12/01/2011	12/31/2011	IP 92709	Licensee Strike Contingency Plans	
		BI ISI - INSERVICE INSPECTION - UNIT 2		1
02/20/2012	03/23/2012	IP 7111108P	Inservice Inspection Activities - PWR	
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		2
02/27/2012	03/02/2012	IP 71124.01	Radiological Hazard Assessment and Exposure Controls	
02/27/2012	03/02/2012	IP 71124.02	Occupational ALARA Planning and Controls	
02/27/2012	03/02/2012	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification	
		OL PREP - PR. ISLAND INIT PREP - 04/2012		4
04/16/2012	04/20/2012	W90250	OL - INITIAL EXAM - 2012 MAY - PRAI	
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		1
04/23/2012	04/27/2012	IP 71124.08	Radioactive Solid Waste Processing and Radioactive Material Handling, Storage, and Transportation	
		ISFSI - ISFSI INSPECTION - SCHEDULE DEPENDENT		1
05/01/2012	07/31/2012	IP 60855.1	Operation of an Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation at Operating Plants	
		OL EXAM - PR. ISLAND INIT EXAM - 05/2012		5
05/14/2012	05/25/2012	W90250	OL - INITIAL EXAM - 2012 MAY - PRAI	
		BI FIRE - FIRE PROTECTION INSPECTION & BAG TRIP		5
05/21/2012	06/22/2012	IP 7111105T	Fire Protection [Triennial]	
		BI EPX - EP EXERCISE INSPECTION / PI VERIFICATION		2
07/09/2012	07/13/2012	IP 7111401	Exercise Evaluation	
07/09/2012	07/13/2012	IP 71151	Performance Indicator Verification	
		BI PI&R - BIENNIAL PI&R		3
07/23/2012	08/10/2012	IP 71152B	Problem Identification and Resolution	

Prairie Island
Inspection / Activity Plan
09/01/2011 - 12/31/2012

Planned Dates		Inspection Activity	Title	No. of Staff on Site
Start	End			
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		1
07/30/2012	08/03/2012	IP 71124.06	Radioactive Gaseous and Liquid Effluent Treatment	
		BI HS - TRIENNIAL HEAT SINK INSPECTION		2
08/13/2012	08/17/2012	IP 7111107T	Heat Sink Performance	
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		1
10/01/2012	10/05/2012	IP 71124.03	In-Plant Airborne Radioactivity Control and Mitigation	
10/01/2012	10/05/2012	IP 71124.04	Occupational Dose Assessment	
		BI ISI - INSERVICE INSPECTION - UNIT 1		1
10/01/2012	11/02/2012	IP 7111108P	Inservice Inspection Activities - PWR	
		RENEWAL - LICENSE RENEWAL INSPECTION 71003 PHASE 1		2
10/01/2012	11/02/2012	IP 71003	Post-Approval Site Inspection for License Renewal	
		BI RP - RADIATION PROTECTION BASELINE INSPECTION		1
11/26/2012	11/30/2012	IP 71124.05	Radiation Monitoring Instrumentation	
		STRIKE - STRIKE CONTINGENCY - RP/QC		2
12/01/2012	12/31/2012	IP 92709	Licensee Strike Contingency Plans	